

Message Text

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73

ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

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O 082143Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 690

AMCONSUL SYDNEY NIACT IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

CINCPAC

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 0052

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

SYDNEY FOR WENTWORTH

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, US, NZ, TH, MARR

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORTS US TO ASK GNZ TO SEND TROOPS TO THAILAND

REF SELDEN/MICHAUD TELECON JANUARY 9

1. SUMMARY. JANUARY 9 WELLINGTON "DOMINION" CARRIES FRONT PAGE STORY HEADLINED "U.S. PONDERES KIWI TROOPS FOR THAILAND", AND SAYS CODEL HOLLINGS/GRIFFIN LIKELY TO SUGGEST DURING JANUARY 11-15 VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND THAT NEW ZEALAND TROOPS BE SENT TO THAILAND. AMBASSADOR HAS ISSUED FLAT DENIAL OF REPORT. END SUMMARY.

2. THERE FOLLOWS SALIENT PARTS OF "DOMINION" ARTICLE:
"AMERICAN POLITICIANS VISITING WELLINGTON NEXT WEEK ARE LIKELY TO SUGGEST NEW ZEALAND COMMIT TROOPS TO THAILAND. THEY INCLUDE TWO MEMBERS OF THE SENATE
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FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE AND TWO MEMBERS OF THE

CONGRESS ARMED FORCES COMMITTEE.

"NEW ZEALAND TROOPS, CURRENTLY STATIONED IN SINGAPORE, COULD EASILY BE MOVED INTO THAILAND WHENEVER THEY ARE FINALLY WITHDRAWN.

"LAST YEAR THAI STUDENTS MOUNTED THEIR LARGEST ANTI-AMERICAN DEMONSTRATIONS AFTER THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT, IGNORING BANGKOK'S WISHES, USED ITS SERVICE BASE AT U TAPAO AS THE MAIN STAGING BASE FOR ITS ARMED OPERATION TO RESCUE A FREIGHTER DETAINED BY THE CAMBODIANS.

"THE THAI GOVERNMENT HAS SINCE GONE OUT OF ITS WAY TO REASSURE THE UNITED STATES THAT IT WANTS CONTINUED GOOD RELATIONS IN AN APPARENT EFFORT TO ACHIEVE SOME BALANCE IN RELATIONS WITH THE SUPERPOWERS.

"THE APPEARANCE OF NEW ZEALAND TROOPS ON THE SCENE, EVEN IN A TOKEN CAPACITY, WILL THEREFORE REINFORCE THE UNITED STATES STAND IN THAILAND.

"SENATOR BAKER WILL BE AWARE THAT IT WAS A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT THAT FIRST COMMITTED NEW ZEALAND TROOPS TO VIENTAM AND THAT HE IS NOW LIKELY TO STRIKE A MORE RESPONSIVE CHORD IN ANY APPEAL FOR HELP TO MR. MULDOON."

3. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT:

"THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO NEW ZEALAND, ARMISTEAD I. SELDEN, TODAY FLATLY DENIED THE STORY APPEARING IN THE JANUARY 9 EDITION OF THE DOMINION WHICH SPECULATES THAT THE DELEGATION FROM THE UNITED STATES SENATE WHICH ARRIVES IN NEW ZEALAND ON JANUARY 11 IS LIKELY TO RAISE WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF NEW ZEALAND THE QUESTION OF NEW ZEALAND FORCES GOING TO THAILAND.

"AS INDICATED IN THE PRESS RELEASE ISSUED BY THE UNITED STATES INFORMATION SERVICE IN WELLINGTON ON UNCLASSIFIED

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JANUARY 7, THE FOUR UNITED STATES SENATORS VISITING NEW ZEALAND NEXT WEEK ARE ON A FAMILIARIZATION AND FACT FINDING TRIP TO NEW ZEALAND AND OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE PACIFIC AREA. THAT REMAINS THE SOLE PURPOSE OF THEIR VISIT.

"THE FABRICATION REGARDING A LIKELY AMERICAN SUGGESTION THAT NEW ZEALAND TROOPS MOVE TO THAILAND

WAS PUT TO THE EMBASSY ON JANUARY 8 BY A DOMINION
REPORTER, WHO WAS TOLD NO SUCH TOPIC WAS ON THE AGENDA
FOR THE SENATORS' VISIT.

"THE AMBASSADOR TERMED THE STORY IN THE DOMINION
AS A FIGMENT OF SOMEONE'S IMAGINATION."
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